

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING OF THURSDAY, 3 March 2022

The Committee met in **Public** Session at 09.31 a.m., a quorum being present.

The following Members were present:

Deputies: Brian Stanley (Cathaoirleach), Colm Burke, Matt Carthy, Cormac Devlin, Alan Dillon, Paul McAuliffe, Imelda Munster, Catherine Murphy (Leas-Chathaoirleach), Verona Murphy.

Apologies: Deputies Jennifer Carroll MacNeill, Neasa Hourigan and Séan Sherlock.

Permanent Witness: Mr. Seamus McCarthy, Comptroller and Auditor General.

1. Witnesses Examined

Home Building Finance Ireland Ltd.

- Ms Dara Deering, Chief Executive
- Mr. Seán Alger, Head of Credit and Risk
- Ms Denise Donovan, Head of Operations and Finance

Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

- Mr. Brian Hill, Audit Manager

Matters for discussion

- Home Building Finance Ireland Financial Statements 2020

The Committee suspended at 10.56.

The Committee resumed in **Public** Session at 11.13.

It was agreed that the Clerk would request any follow-up information and carry out any agreed actions arising from the meeting. It was also agreed to note and publish the opening statement and briefing documents provided to the Committee for the meeting.

The Committee suspended at 12.23.

The Committee resumed in **Private** Session at 13.36.

2. Private Session

The Committee agreed to issue a Press Statement in relation to information in the public domain regarding the Department of Health and the HSE.

The Committee agreed to re-state its position regarding correspondence it has received in relation to innovation vouchers.

The Committee resumed in **Public** session at 14.40.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 24 February 2022 were agreed.

4. Financial Statements and Accounts

The Committee noted ten sets of financial statements and accounts which were laid before the Dáil between 21 and 25 February 2022.

The Committee has a standing agreement to request explanations for any significant non-compliant procurement or delays in laying accounts before the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Ref	Body/main purpose	Accounting period/ turnover	Date certified	Date laid	Audit opinion/notes
1	Dundalk Institute of Technology (click here to view accounts)	2019/2020 €68 million	20 Dec 2021	21 Feb 2022	Clear audit opinion
2	Dublin City University (click here to view accounts)	2019/2020 €258 million	16 Dec 2021	21 Feb 2022	Clear audit opinion Attention is drawn to the recognition of a deferred pension funding asset (standard for universities). (click here for further information)
3	Royal Irish Academy of Music (click here to view accounts)	2020 €13.5 million	25 Nov 2021	21 Feb 2022	Clear audit opinion
4	Grangegorman Development Agency (click here to view accounts)	2020 €7.6 million	30 Sep 2021	22 Feb 2022	Clear audit opinion

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5	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (click here to view accounts)	2020 €10.2 million	20 Dec 2021	23 Feb 2022	Qualified audit opinion Accounts give a true and fair view, except that they account for the costs of retirement benefit entitlements of staff only as they become payable (standard for many health bodies). (click here for further information)
6	The Judicial Council (click here to view accounts) <i>Note: New body. First period of account.</i>	17 Dec 2019 to 31 Dec 2020 €443,000	16 Dec 2021	23 Feb 2022	Clear audit opinion
7	Greyhound Racing Operations Ireland Limited (click here to view accounts)	2020 €1.1 million	23 Apr 2021	24 Feb 2022	Clear audit opinion
8	Abargrove Limited (click here to view accounts)	2020 €900,000	23 Apr 2021	24 Feb 2022	Clear audit opinion
9	Shelbourne Greyhound Stadium Limited (click here to view accounts)	2020 Nil	23 Apr 2021	24 Feb 2022	Clear audit opinion
10	Residential Tenancies Board (click here to view accounts)	2020 €18.3 million	15 Jun 2021	24 Feb 2022	Annual report re-presented to the Oireachtas library to correct an error in the previous version presented on 13 September 2021. (click here for further information)

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5. Correspondence

Correspondence received		
A – Briefing Documents and Opening Statements		Decision
R1107 PAC33	Correspondence received from Dara Deering, Chief Executive, Home Building Finance Ireland, dated 25/02/2022	Note and publish.
R1108 PAC33	Correspondence received from Dara Deering, Chief Executive, Home Building Finance Ireland, dated 25/02/2022	Note and publish.
R1109 PAC33	Correspondence received from Dara Deering, Chief Executive, Home Building Finance Ireland, dated 25/02/2022	Note and publish.
B – Correspondence from Accounting Officers and/or Ministers and follow up to PAC meetings		Decision

Correspondence received		
R1079 PAC33	Correspondence received from Government Accounting Unit, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, dated 16/02/2022	Note and publish. It was agreed to request: - further information regarding the timeline for proposed legislation regarding an independent building standards regulator and - details of the remit and responsibilities of the National Building Control Management Project.
R1084 PAC33	Correspondence received from Clíodhna Guy, Interim CEO, Irish Horse Racing Regulatory Board, dated 17/02/2022	Note and publish. It was agreed to send a copy of the previous correspondence received in November 2021 and request clarification in relation to the installation timeline and whether all racecourses will have CCTV installed.
R1086 PAC33	Correspondence received from Niall Cody, Chairman, Office of the Revenue	Note and publish.
R1087 PAC33	Correspondence received from Séan Ó Foghlú, Secretary General, Department of Education, dated 18/02/2022	Note and publish.
R1088 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ken Spratt, Secretary General, Department of Transport, dated 18/02/2022	Note and publish.
R1092 PAC33	Correspondence received from John McKeon, Secretary General, Department of Social Protection, dated 21/02/2022	Note and publish. It was agreed to request a copy of an inter-departmental review regarding the introduction and operation of COVID-19 emergency income supports , and to forward copies of R1092, R1096, and R1105 to Deputy Ged Nash.
R1095 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ken Spratt, Secretary General, Department of Transport, dated 21/02/2022	Note and publish. It was agreed to request further information regarding: - how the target to have 945,000 electric vehicles on the roads by 2030 was arrived at, how realistic is the target and what that figure is based on; - the rationale for the cap of €60,000 for battery electric vehicles; and - whether people in rural areas are subsidising electric vehicles in the greater Dublin area, and has the Department given, or is it giving, any consideration to reducing that subsidy limit to under €60,000.
R1096 PAC33	Correspondence received from Niall Cody, Chairman, Office of the Revenue Commissioners, dated 21/02/2022	Note and publish.
R1098 PAC33	Correspondence received from John Dollard, Chief Superintendent, An Garda Síochána, dated 18/02/2022	Note and publish.

Correspondence received		
R1099 PAC33	Correspondence received from Anne Graham, Chief Executive, National Transport Authority, dated 22/02/2022	Note and publish. It was agreed to request further information as follows: - is there a separate parallel process in place to add on some additional extensions to the DART projects; and - information previously requested by the Committee regarding bus stops and bus shelters on the old N7 and N78 route.
R1102 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ray Mitchell, Assistant National Director, HSE, dated 23/02/2022	Note and publish.
R1105 PAC33	Correspondence received from John Hogan, Secretary General, Department of Finance, dated 23/03/2022	Note and publish.
C - Correspondence from and related to private individuals and any other correspondence		Decision
R1090 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 21/02/2022	Note. It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.
R1091 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 21/02/2022	It was agreed to hold over for consideration at the next meeting.
R1097 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 18/02/2022	It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.

6. Work Programme

It was agreed to proceed with the proposed schedule of meetings.

It was agreed to request an update from the University of Limerick regarding a KPMG report in relation to the purchase of the former Dunnes Stores site (previous correspondence item R1077 refers).

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Committee adjourned at 15.12 until Thursday 10 March 2022.



Brian Stanley, T.D.
Cathaoirleach
10 March 2022